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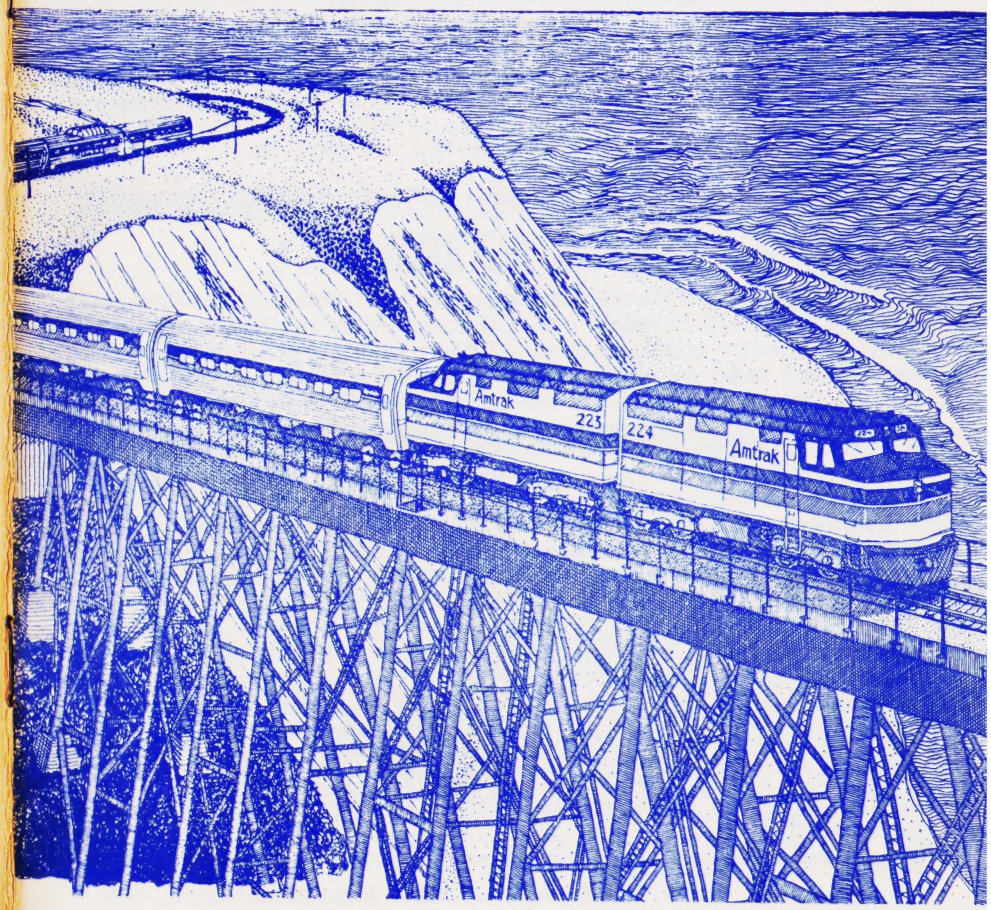
RAIL TRAVEL NEWS



REPORT ON THE ICC HEARINGS

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RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

REPORT ON THE ICC HEARINGS

LETTERS

This is a letter to call for the resignation of Amtrak's marketing department upper management. The vice president, Al Michaud, "praises DOT plan". That statement alone sheds doubt on his competency and loyalty because he is willing to settle for a smaller rail passenger system rather than an improved and expanded one.

The marketing department stresses their good use of advertising dollars by advertising almost exclusively in four major markets (Washington DC, New York, Chicago and Los Angeles). Sure, this is "dollar-efficient", but it will never help the people in Nashville, Tennessee learn about the FLORIDIAN. Believe me, they don't know it is there. They have told me so numerous times. And what about Parkersburg, Fresno or San Antonio?

Even more embarrassing is that Caltrans has to tell Amtrak how to market the SAN DIEGANS. Caltrans has to tell these geniuses in the marketing department that higher fares may actually cause many more vacant seats than increased revenues. Thank God Amtrak's board of directors rescinded the sleeping car surcharge for the summer. At least they see the light.

I will concede that a few good ideas have come forth (USA Rail Pass, Kellogg's cereal train ride promo, etc.), but these are far outweighed by the above examples and much more. I cringe daily at the thought of what may pop out of someone's head on the fifth floor of Amtrak's headquarters. We don't need frills or gimmicks. We need good solid, well-managed train service. In short, I believe Amtrak's ridership increases are not attributable in any large measure to their weak marketing effort.

Amtrak employee
Name withheld

My recent journey via Amtrak and Southern Railway (NYC-New Orleans-Chicago-Kalamazoo-Springfield MA-NYC) left me with some distinct impressions regarding the future of Amtrak. While on these trips I try to pay close attention to my fellow (non-railfan) passengers; listening to them and trying to view what is going on thru their eyes. This is where I often get discouraged.

I enjoyed my travels thoroughly and I am sure many of my fellow travelers did too. However, there are still too many situations which we rail-oriented riders tend to rationalize happening which perplex and upset the average passenger and give him an anti-rail travel bias.

Lateness is epidemic and frustrating. Most of my trains were ½-hour or more late; this in perfect weather and operating conditions. The contrast to bus service is stark, as most times when I travel by bus the drivers go out of their way to reach their destinations (and therefore get home) on time.

Arriving in Albany on the LAKE SHORE one hour late, we took ½-hour more than scheduled to break the train into the Boston and New York sections. No one could understand why. It certainly wasn't for lack of railroad employees, all, I am sure, earning several hours' pay for waving a hand, tightening two hoses together, banging a hammer, running a diesel back and forth (several needed here!), supervising, or whatever. Anything but getting us out on time. Following our departure on the Boston section, I had to explain to bewildered passengers in my car why we had to ride backward for twelve miles. Until I explained it, these people thought Amtrak was crazy.

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The constant changing of crews is also bewildering to someone who hasn't somehow rationalized the absurdity of 1860's work rules.

Somehow this all has to change if Amtrak is to reduce its deficit and survive. That all Amtrak and railway employees should work like the rest of us is a given (some do already!). However, I have little faith that the government will "take the bull by the horns" and allow much change in that area.

Another area for change is more difficult to pinpoint. Perhaps the example given earlier of my impatient Greyhound driver illustrates a point. This sort of urgency to "get moving" sometimes known as "hustle" is rare in passenger train operations. There is none of that old-fashioned pride in on-time operation, and I doubt that much happens to employees who are responsible for the delays.

Perhaps each Amtrak train should have its own crew who, much like on a ship, would run the train from start to finish. Strict division-of-labor would be abolished with workers sharing the various responsibilities of running a good train. Pay bonuses could be given to crews whose trains chalk up good performance records, attract new passengers, etc. Crew members might "raise a little hell" up the line for delays, mechanical failures, sandwich shortages, etc., rather than blame it on a plodding bureaucracy, as now seems to be the case.

These crews could be given a great deal of latitude to be innovative and run a good operation. What would result would be a mini-private enterprise for the employees who would gain directly if they worked hard, kept costs low, and pleased their riders.

Philip N. Klopp
Easton, Pennsylvania

THE COVER STORY

This drawing of an Amtrak train running along California's scenic coastline is taken from a draft of the Caltrans Program for Intercity Rail Service, just published. The Program is summarized in this issue. Caltrans artist Rich Tolmach has, you will note, taken a little artist's liberty in joining up a conventional dome car neatly with the Amfleet cars, pulled by a pair of F40 engines.

ICC AMTRAK HEARINGS DRAW TO A CLOSE

The Interstate Commerce Commission's hearings on the DOT's proposal to cut back the Amtrak system are closing on Jul 24 in Washington DC, where they began on Jun 26. The complete hearing schedule was published in our last issue. A major report on the hearings appears elsewhere in this issue.

BART DIRECTOR HERRINGER IS RESIGNING

In a surprise move, BART general manager and former UMTA head Frank C. Herringer announced Jun 29 that he will leave BART at the end of 1978. He cited disappointment and frustration with the system that "will never achieve the promises made in 1962" when the system was started. At that time, trains on 90-second headways were foreseen. It is generally agreed that BART has made considerable progress since Herringer, called the most talented man in mass transit, was appointed to his present position on Jul 1, 1975. Herringer said he "might become bored a year down the road" and said he would take a job in private industry. BART announced Jul 12 that it has appointed a committee to search for a replacement. Said BART Board President Harvey Glasser, "Herringer's accomplishments have clearly demonstrated that in the public as well as in the private sector there is no substitute for top quality management... the salaries of high quality top management are cost effective and repay themselves many times over." Herringer earns $68,500 yearly.

RAIL CANADA

ALL COACH SEATS on VIA's CANADIAN are reserved, effective Jun 23, "to accommodate the increased demand" expected due to the lower VIA fares which CP began selling on Jun 15. Altho both CN and CP are now selling at VIA rates, each railway still quotes and sells on its own lines only--no "interlining" yet.

BRITISH COLUMBIA LEGISLATURE has enacted a bill that transfers responsibility for funding urban transit services from BC Hydro (a Crown Corporation) to the individual cities and areas served. The cities have been given authority to raise local taxes, including imposition of a "transit tax" on gasoline, to pay for transit. The provincial government says it will make an annual grant to each city, but it won't say whether the grant will be a flat sum, a percentage of loss incurred, or some other arrangement. Due to the high capital costs of light rapid transit, many local politicians feel that it may never be built in Vancouver--residents would be unwilling to support it thru increased taxes.

OUR PHONES ARE HUMMING

THE ABOVE CAPTION is from a current VIA newspaper ad that states "At this very busy travel time of the year, some of our customers may experience difficulty in getting through to our reservation centres by phone."

TRANSPORT 2000 CANADA has received a grant of $12,500 from the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, House of Commons, to help support its continued advocacy and consumer assistance activities in transportation. Public transport consumers with complaints or queries should direct them to Transport 200, PO Box 300, Terminal A, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 8V2, or telephone 819-777-1316.

VIA RAIL CANADA pays its bills with cheques bearing an attractive blue Turbotrain photograph as background printing.

THE E&N DAYLINER of CP Rail's (Victoria-Courtenay) did not get lower VIA fares on Jun 15, possibly due to an earlier agreement between VIA and CP that VIA would not assume responsibility for the service until its status and future had been settled in the courts. However, on Jul 8 VIA fares were finally extended to this train. A one-way Victoria-Courtenay fare fell from $14.45 to $8, while CP Rail's 30-day return excursion of $19.30 plummeted to $10 under VIA's 3-day plan. A UTU official charged in late June that altho the new E&N rates were discussed in a briefing VIA gave to E&N operators in early June, the railway was "keeping them secret". B.C. Premier Bill Bennett rode the train on Jul 11, drumming up publicity. He reportedly has pledged government funds to help campaign for the train's continuation. A second Budd car has been added to the train to handle crowds. A B.C. Railway car was shipped to Vancouver Island for that purpose. The run is currently scheduled for discontinuance at the end of 1978.

ONTARIO NORTHLAND RAILWAY schedules for Jun 23 find the NORTHLAND (trains 98-99) still running daily Toronto-Kapuskasing. The former TEE trains are ONR numbers 120-125 (ONR fares apply to them). These run Toronto-North Bay and Toronto-Timmins on fairly complicated schedules. Train 121 which formerly ran daily except Wed now runs Mon-Fri to Timmins. Train 123 is a new service replacing VIA #97 which ran to North Bay on Fri only; 123 runs Fri and Sun. On Sundays, train 125 replaces VIA's RDC 673 and is extended from North Bay to Timmins. Train 122, Timmins-Toronto, runs daily except Sat--formerly daily except Tues.

STRIKING DECK OFFICERS forced tieup of the Seattle-Victoria ferry steamer "Princess Marguerite" upon arrival in Victoria Jul 5. With a new contract agreement reached, the ship returned to Seattle late on Jul 6. Patronage of the ship continues high--1541 on Jul 1, 1436 Jul 3. Grace McCarthy, B.C. tourism minister, criticized for an earlier announcement that the ship may be retired, said on Jun 28 that it has "7 or 8 years of life" left in it.

SOURCES CLOSE TO CP Rail report that CP is considering changing its mind about suspending its "Princess Patricia" Alaska cruises after the current season.

CP RAIL WILL make a decision next year on whether to dig a new tunnel under the present Connaught Tunnel at Rogers Pass between Calgary and Vancouver. The railway needs a second pair of tracks and a less steep grade.

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAY and local officials have discussed the possibility of reviving the "Newfie Bullet" passenger train in Newfoundland as a tourist attraction.

VIA RAIL CANADA cleared a hurdle on Jul 7 when 14 railway unions joined in a signing of 2800 CN and CP Rail employees over to the new passenger corporation.

INTER-CITY RAIL transport study group was formed in Winnipeg Jul 6, with representatives of VIA and the four western provinces. Their mandate is to establish criteria for use of coming LRC trains in the West starting in 1980.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS of VIA includes one consumer representative, Mr. John Hardenne, a travel agent. The Consumers' Association of Canada is dissatisfied with his credentials, however, and wants a person who directly represents the consumer.

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT

SAN DIEGO AREA seems to be moving towards a consensus on whether to acquire the SP's San Diego and Eastern Arizona Railway right-of-way for a light rail system to the Mexican border. Altho the San Diego city council opposed the idea, the Metropolitan Transit Development Board, with wider representation, is pursuing the plan, and local newspapers highly support it. Commented the San Diego Union: "We are warned by the bitter experience of Los Angeles, which abandoned its marvelous trolley right-of-ways and opted entirely for buses." Buses are now merely part of the smog and urban traffic problem, the paper noted.

A TRANSIT STRIKE in Washington DC began Jul 20, halting the Metro and most of the area's buses, despite a court restraining order. On Monday the 24th the subway system was underway again and buses were coming back. At the same time, a massive heat wave hit the area, sending temperatures to a record 100°. On Jul 20 UMTA announced a grant of $54,870,400 to the Metro for construction of 3 stations in suburban Maryland--the Red Line's final sections at Twinbrook, Rockville and Shady Grove. The grant includes engineering design funds for the Green Line between Waterfront and Anacostia stations.

BART BEGAN SUNDAY operation on Jul 2. Six-car trains run 9am-midnight at 20-minute intervals on two lines--Concord-Daly City and Fremont-Richmond. Patronage the first Sunday was higher than expectations--30,000 against a predicted 23,500.

AN UMTA GRANT of $33,801,512 to New Jersey's DOT to continue modernization of the former Erie-Lackawanna commuter railroad in northern New Jersey. It covers a modernized electrification system compatible with the NE Corridor, which will allow commuter trains to travel directly to New York's Penn Station if a proposed track connection is made to the Amtrak line near Kearny (a preliminary application has been made for that project). A payment of $15 million toward purchase of 180 new electric commuter cars is part of the grant.

HOUSTON METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY on Jun 29 approved a rapid transit system plan to cost $3.1 billion and be financed by a 1% sales tax. The plan calls for rubber-tired automated vehicles on concrete guideways. After the criticism of the Texas Association of RR Passengers, HMTA declared that conventional equipment had not been ruled out for the proposed system.

PROPOSITION 13 WOES have forced bus fares up in parts of California. On Jul 1 Southern California Rapid Transit District basic fares rose from 40¢ to 45¢, tho L.A.'s downtown minibuses remain at 15¢. In the San Francisco East Bay, AC Transit basic fares went from 25¢ to 35¢--the first such change in 20 years.

THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC has leased some Amtrak locomotives to use on its San Francisco commute line, and they were going into service in late July. SP is said to be suffering from a shortage of motive power at this time.

BOSTON'S TRANSIT SYSTEM was hit by a one-day strike on Jul 6, taking a quarter-million commuters by surprise. The Boston Evening Globe said the strike hurt labor's cause on the transit system.

TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY ADAMS made a pitch for public transit in a Jun 26 statement: "If we're going to unclog and de-smog our cities and make urban land tax-producing--not tax-consuming--then we must shift from an urban highway philosophy to an urban transit policy. We have to face up to the fact that the automobile is no longer a good means of urban transportation--at least not in the one-on-one way we like to use it." Adams took the opportunity--at an urban development conference--to announce a $2.6 million UMTA grant to Denver to design a pedestrian-transit mall.

A STORY OF MODERNIZING RAIL TRANSIT

The DOT's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) has given out nearly $1.7 billion for rehabilitating, upgrading and modernizing existing rail transit systems since the beginning of its Capital Grant Program (thru May 31, 1977). This is about 28% of its total grants of $6.2 billion.

Since these modernization projects are rarely analyzed for their effects on the rail systems, UMTA decided to do just that this year, on its 14th anniversary, and it has issued a report that studies 88 grants given to eight cities. Besides looking at the effects, UMTA decided to examine key federal policy issues and recommend possible changes.

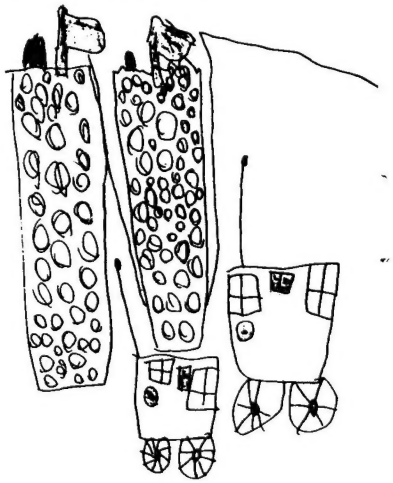
How was this money distributed? 12.3% of it went for light rail, 47% for rapid rail, and 40.7% for commuter rail modes. The purchase of new rolling stock took over half of the money; power system improvement took 11%; and track improvements took 7%.

The 8 cities studied, listed from highest to lowest in amount of grants awarded, are New York region, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Detroit. The New York tristate region was by far the largest recipient, with 47.8% of the total, altho sixth in per capita receipts.

All this money created many person-years of employment--UMTA estimates between 328,000 and 488,000, including multiplier effects.

As an example of some of the operating and financial data reported, we will summarize the commuter rail picture, covering all 14 such railroads in the U.S. up to the end of 1976: Revenue passenger trips have remained pretty stable since 1965, numbering around 195 million, while revenue passenger miles have generally increased, from 4.1 to 4.5 billion. Passenger revenue has risen $136-224 million.

The complete report is available from UMTA Office of Program Evaluation, Att'n Bryan Green, 400 7th St. S.W., Washington DC 20590.



A 4-year-old's view of urban transportation woes--two cars at massive coin-filled parking meters with violation flags. Drawing by Kelda.

REPORT ON THE ICC HEARINGS

AMTRAK OPPONENTS ROLL OUT THEIR BIG GUNS FOR THE FINALE

The ICC's Rail Services Planning Office's hearings on the DOT's proposed cutbacks in the Amtrak system concluded in Washington on Jul 24, where they began on Jun 26 (for complete list of dates and places of hearings, see last issue). The hearings seemed to show that the issue is the bus companies against Amtrak (they seek federal subsidies but want to save face by trying to show that Amtrak is unfair to them) and the Jarvis-Gann-National Taxpayers Union hitting at a convenient whipping boy in order to gain more national prominence.

THE OPENING HEARING

NARP's executive director Ross Capon testified at the Jun 26 Washington hearing, exerpted here: "NARP shares with California DOT the view that 'a basic national rail passenger system is necessary to provide mobility options and to prepare for future rail travel demands resulting from escalating environmental, congestion and resource constraints.' Put more bluntly, the U.S. must begin to build a viable alternative to the automobile system. RAIL IS THE ONLY ENERGY-EFFICIENT ALTERNATIVE MODE WHICH CAN BE MADE ATTRACTIVE TO ALL SEGMENTS OF THE POPULATION. Rail service should therefore be provided in more markets, at faster speeds, and at increased levels of frequency.

"NARP seeks a dramatic new emphasis on public transportation. Because of past spending patterns, this means primarily the development of intercity rail passenger service, but it also means the improvement of all urban transit as well as intercity bus services and the improvement of connections among the various modes. Thus we advocate spending far greater amounts of money on intercity rail passenger service than Amtrak has received to date--especially for capital improvements --and the resulting benefits would likewise be great:

*Lives would be saved as more people would be diverted from the dangerous automobile.

*energy consumption in the U.S. would be reduced, in turn reducing oil import levels which now have serious negative effects on the economy, both domestic and international.

*Rail freight service would improve as a result of necessary track improvements.

*Highway maintenance costs would go down and highway safety would improve as a result of diversion of truck and automobile traffic to the rails.

*Environmental problems, notably air pollution and wasteful land use, would be eased.

*City centers and urban transit would benefit.

As public transportation improves generally, life would become fuller and more pleasant for people who do not have automobiles, and it would become practical for people to voluntarily live without automobiles (as opposed to doing so as a result of economic or physical limitations). The ability of the U.S. to adapt to the less energy-intensive lifestyle required in the future would be enhanced as automobile-dependent developments (i.e., suburban shopping malls) would be discouraged.

We think Scenario E in the DOT report represents a good start towards accomplishment of our objectives. We regret that the Secretary rejected this option which, according to DOT's own estimates would have a lower operating deficit per passenger mile than any of the other scenarios including the one the Secretary chose. We would also assign high priority to the following routes not included in Scenario E:

St. Louis-Little Rock-Dallas-Laredo (INTER-AMERICAN).

New Orleans-Jacksonville.
Both Atlanta-New Orleans routes (Birmingham/Meridian and Montgomery/Mobile/Biloxi/Gulfport).
Cleveland-Columbus-Dayton-Cincinnati.
Chicago-El Paso-Tucson-Phoenix thru service."

Mr. Capon noted that the DOT's plan to upgrade Atlanta-New Orleans-Los Angeles service to daily and to provide a direct Portland-Spokane link was desirable, but "the package as a whole is a big setback and we strongly oppose it".

* * *

Among others opposing the DOT plan was NARP member Bryan Green of Maryland. He said "The DOT approach is not the way to go. Rather than saying, 'How can Amtrak be cut so as to minimize the Federal cost' as DOT has done, a better approach is to say, 'What changes (both additions and subtractions) can be made to make Amtrak function more efficiently and effectively?' The recommended route plan leads to but one conclusion--DOT is more interested in cutting Amtrak than in achieving the best (not necessarily the largest) passenger train system."

* * *

The National Taxpayers Union, fresh from the victory it claimed in California's property-tax-cutting Proposition 13, and claiming a million nationwide members, took the opportunity to move into the national limelight further by hitting out at a vulnerable Amtrak. NTU director Charles S. Crawford III called Amtrak "a perfect example of a program kept in place by special interest groups with no consideration of the excessive costs to taxpayers." He added "It is not a social service which provides an irreplaceable benefit to its constituents. It is not critical to national defense. In fact, alternatively, unsubsidized common carriers provide faster, more efficient service at far less cost. Does it make sense for the Federal government to subsidize competing modes of transportation along the same routes when one is a dismal failure with no hope of recovery? Amtrak has no hope of reversing the decades-old trend toward declining rail travel. Yet it siphons off billions of dollars in hard-earned taxpayers dollars to satisfy a few selfish rail unions and a few Congressmen who believe it is in the public interest to support an extravagant rail passenger system thru their districts at the expense of all other taxpayers."

Crawford continued, "Today the NTU is announcing that it is our goal to identify on a nationwide basis those in Congress who have ignored the pleas of caution, and have supported pouring billions of dollars into the system to continue rail service in their districts with total disregard of the needs, or wants, or desires of the average American taxpayers... If there is a legitimate need for intercity rail travel, then it should be financed by the riders and not by taking us taxpayers for a ride we don't want."

(In a reply to this anti-train attack, NARP director Dan Monaghan said later in the S.W. RR Historical Society's newsletter that the NTU had made "false and misleading statements." He pointed out that the NTU claimed that other modes are unsubsidized when in actuality $2 billion yearly is paid out for air control and airport expenses, for example. Said Monaghan, "Agencies (like the NTU) regularly appear to champion a cause either to promote some vested interest or to make a fast buck for themselves. The way to do it is make a huge outcry over some relatively unimportant facet of a larger issue which can conveniently be attacked in a dramatic fashion and hopefully browbeaten into submission while ignoring the more profound aspects of the issue. If the NTU were sincere in their efforts to reduce transportation subsidies, they would start with aviation, since the DOT stated in a Jan 1976 news release that the air traveler pays only one-third the cost of his ticket while the general taxpayer pays the rest... I cannot be convinced of the sincerity of the NTU when I see them going after the gnat instead of the camel.")

THE IN-BETWEEN HEARINGS

Thanks to the many readers who sent us copies of their testimony and letters to officials on this topic, newsclippings, etc. With some exceptions, rail supporters reported that the hearings went well. The largest number of people testifying was counted at Minot ND, where 70 spoke. Other counts were: Pittsburgh 64 (a hearing was scheduled there at the last minute), Dallas 59, Dayton about 56, Racine 40, Chicago 44, San Antonio 29, Miami 35, Dallas 60, Little Rock over 20.

SEATTLE: Witnesses urged Amtrak to advertise the PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL more effectively. Two Democratic Congressmen urged changes and improvements rather than cuts. Wenatchee Chamber of Commerce manager Robert Sumbardo supported the cuts. Greyhound and the Amalgamated Transit Workers Union, representing Greyhound drivers, spoke against trains. WashARP members testified, said hearing went very well.

SPOKANE: WashARP members said hearing went well. (The Washington Transportation Commission decided to oppose the cuts in the state of Washington.)

PORTLAND: OreARP members spoke here and in Pendleton. Portland's Mayor Neil Goldschmidt supported the PIONEER's retention. He said the train's deficit was only half of that predicted. A Pacific Trailways bus representative spoke against trains. The president of Mt. Hood Stages bus line urged dropping the PIONEER. An NTU representative supported the DOT cutbacks. Newspapers reported on the whole "strong support" of rail service. OreARP chairman Arthur Poole presented lengthy testimony. He urged retaining present trains in the Northwest, plus the SFZ, and adding the following: another Seattle-Vancouver train, a Portland-Spokane link, and extension of the MOUNT RAINIER to Eugene. OreARP member Richard Carlson urged a Salt Lake-Las Vegas-L.A. route and service between New Orleans and Jacksonville. Member Ken McFarling urged that the federal government create a politico-economic environment wherein the intrinsic merits of each mode determine the nature and extent of its use.

(continued on page 14)

New Orleans-Jacksonville.
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The National Taxpayers Union, fresh from the victory it claimed in California's property-tax-cutting Proposition 13, and claiming a million nationwide members, took the opportunity to move into the national limelight further by hitting out at a vulnerable Amtrak. NTU director Charles S. Crawford III called Amtrak "a perfect example of a program kept in place by special interest groups with no consideration of the excessive costs to taxpayers." He added "It is not a social service which provides an irreplaceable benefit to its constituents. It is not critical to national defense. In fact, alternatively, unsubsidized common carriers provide faster, more efficient service at far less cost. Does it make sense for the Federal government to subsidize competing modes of transportation along the same routes when one is a dismal failure with no hope of recovery? Amtrak has no hope of reversing the decades-old trend toward declining rail travel. Yet it siphons off billions of dollars in hard-earned taxpayers dollars to satisfy a few selfish rail unions and a few Congressmen who believe it is in the public interest to support an extravagant rail passenger system thru their districts at the expense of all other taxpayers."

Crawford continued, "Today the NTU is announcing that it is our goal to identify on a nationwide basis those in Congress who have ignored the pleas of caution, and have supported pouring billions of dollars into the system to continue rail service in their districts with total disregard of the needs, or wants, or desires of the average American taxpayers... If there is a legitimate need for intercity rail travel, then it should be financed by the riders and not by taking us taxpayers for a ride we don't want."

(In a reply to this anti-train attack, NARP director Dan Monaghan said later in the S.W. RR Historical Society's newsletter that the NTU had made "false and misleading statements." He pointed out that the NTU claimed that other modes are unsubsidized when in actuality $2 billion yearly is paid out for air control and airport expenses, for example. Said Monaghan, "Agencies (like the NTU) regularly appear to champion a cause either to promote some vested interest or to make a fast buck for themselves. The way to do it is make a huge outcry over some relatively unimportant facet of a larger issue which can conveniently be attacked in a dramatic fashion and hopefully browbeaten into submission while ignoring the more profound aspects of the issue. If the NTU were sincere in their efforts to reduce transportation subsidies, they would start with aviation, since the DOT stated in a Jan 1976 news release that the air traveler pays only one-third the cost of his ticket while the general taxpayer pays the rest... I cannot be convinced of the sincerity of the NTU when I see them going after the gnat instead of the camel.")

THE IN-BETWEEN HEARINGS

Thanks to the many readers who sent us copies of their testimony and letters to officials on this topic, newsclippings, etc. With some exceptions, rail supporters reported that the hearings went well. The largest number of people testifying was counted at Minot ND, where 70 spoke. Other counts were: Pittsburgh 64 (a hearing was scheduled there at the last minute), Dallas 59, Dayton about 56, Racine 40, Chicago 44, San Antonio 29, Miami 35, Dallas 60, Little Rock over 20.

SEATTLE: Witnesses urged Amtrak to advertise the PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL more effectively. Two Democratic Congressmen urged changes and improvements rather than cuts. Wenatchee Chamber of Commerce manager Robert Sumbardo supported the cuts. Greyhound and the Amalgamated Transit Workers Union, representing Greyhound drivers, spoke against trains. WashARP members testified, said hearing went very well.

SPOKANE: WashARP members said hearing went well. (The Washington Transportation Commission decided to oppose the cuts in the state of Washington.)

PORTLAND: OreARP members spoke here and in Pendleton. Portland's Mayor Neil Goldschmidt supported the PIONEER's retention. He said the train's deficit was only half of that predicted. A Pacific Trailways bus representative spoke against trains. The president of Mt. Hood Stages bus line urged dropping the PIONEER. An NTU representative supported the DOT cutbacks. Newspapers reported on the whole "strong support" of rail service. OreARP chairman Arthur Poole presented lengthy testimony. He urged retaining present trains in the Northwest, plus the SFZ, and adding the following: another Seattle-Vancouver train, a Portland-Spokane link, and extension of the MOUNT RAINIER to Eugene. OreARP member Richard Carlson urged a Salt Lake-Las Vegas-L.A. route and service between New Orleans and Jacksonville. Member Ken McFarling urged that the federal government create a politico-economic environment wherein the intrinsic merits of each mode determine the nature and extent of its use.

(continued on page 14)

Mixed Train of Thoughts

THE EMPIRE BUILDER was to return to its normal route between Spokane and Seattle on Jul 23. The stops at Ellensburg, Yakima and Pasco were restored with the first eastbound train leaving Seattle Jul 20 and westbound from Spokane

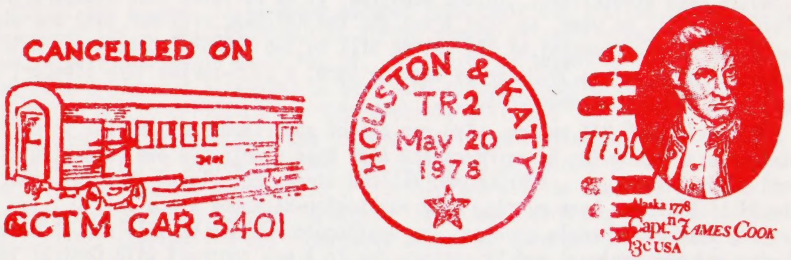
THE EMPIRE BUILDER was to return to its normal route between Spokane and Seattle on Jul 23. The stops at Ellensburg, Yakima and Pasco are to be restored with the first eastbound train leaving Seattle Jul 30 and westbound from Spokane on Jul 31. The rail line over Stampede Pass had several washouts last December, and until mid-April the train detoured on the Milwaukee Road's line over Snoqualmie Pass. Due to bad track conditions the train was re-routed in mid-April via Wenatchee pending completion of track work on the Stampede Pass route..... A NEW STOP at Dearborn, Michigan will be inaugurated Jul 30. Four trains will stop there in each direction: the WOLVERINE, TWILIGHT LIMITED, SAINT CLAIR and the Mon-thru-Fri MICHIGAN EXECUTIVE. Amtrak said it plans to have platforms built and a temporary modular station in use by Jul 30, staffed by an Amtrak agent. The trains will not carry local Dearborn-Detroit passengers except those ticketed to ride on the NIAGARA RAINBOW or ticketed to connect with VIA's Canadian National trains departing from Windsor, Ontario for Toronto and Montreal. Amtrak stations can issue tickets for travel on VIA CN lines. The station is at 16121 Michigan Avenue, and has parking available.....

* * *

THE SOUTHWEST LIMITED'S lead Amtrak engine #500 on Jun 29 eastbound struck a container on a freight on the adjoining track in Seligman, Arizona. The impact pushed the container clear of the rest of the train, breaking the left windshield and destroying the left window and door in engine 500. The engine crew saw the danger in time to "hit the deck" and avoid injury. The train continued on to the Seligman stop, where #500 was cut off and the train continued with two engines, leaving 1 hour 20 minutes late..... A METROLINER HEADED for New York collided with a car on Jul 3 at a downtown intersection in Aberdeen MD. One person in the car was killed..... A FIRE IN two sleeping cars on Britain's Penzance-to-London express train killed 11 people and injured about 30 others on Jul 5 at Taunton, 143 miles southwest of London. The first car, in which 15 passengers were sleeping, was described as completely gutted by the flames. Of the 15, 10 died and 4 were injured..... EASTBOUND EMPIRE BUILDER almost stalled in the Cascade Tunnel the night of Jun 20. The 17-car consist had 230 passengers when one of the two F40PHR units, #243, overheated and shut down on the 1.57% ascending grade. Lead unit 251 was able to drag the train thru the bore. Amtrak officials were reportedly surprised to find that BN does not provide ventilating fan "service" for passenger trains, which may account for the engines running warm-to-hot in the 7.8-mile tunnel...

GREYHOUND BEGAN TEST runs of a new luxury bus between Boston and Washington on Jul 12. The new bus seats only 23 passengers, with 2-and1 seating, and offers headsets with 4 radio and tape channels. Greyhound said it might offer hostess-served food aboard the buses if a premium fare can be adopted. Two of the kitchenette-equipped vehicles are currently available.....

WE RECENTLY RECEIVED some correspondance with the special train cancellation shown below on the envelope. Can anyone supply information about this cancellation?..... RAILWAY GAZETTE INTERNATIONAL, published in London, editorialized this way about Reistrup's resignation from Amtrak: "Right thru this last winter he has been fighting off cuts in his operating budget which would make continuation of the present service impossible--altho he is not allowed to withdraw trains either. The 5-year investment plan is a dead letter. It was the dismal performance during the winter of 1976-77--when cold weather plus speed restrictions imposed on derailment-prone SDP40F locos reduced Amtrak's schedules to a shambles for several weeks--which really turned Congress sour. Yet high costs are at the root of the problem. Production of long-distance passenger stock is on such a small scale that purchase of new vehicles is crippling... Charges passed on by the railways reflect the heavy burden of work rules, and staff-to-passenger ratios aboard the trains are far too high. Competition from airlines, buses and cheap petrol keeps fares well below economic levels". The magazine described Reistrup as "disillusioned with the attitude of government and Congress" and concluded that: "With VIA cutting back transcontinental service... and a major rethink on Amtrak inevitable, the future for long-haul trains in North America is far from rosy".....



UNIFORMED NATIONAL PARK Service naturalist is aboard the EMPIRE BUILDER for the 56-mile ride between East Glacier and West Glacier (Belton) stations every Mon, Wed and Fri from Jun 26 thru Sep 1, Amtrak announced Jun 23. Amtrak noted that the train's traversal of the southern edge of the park is by daylight in both directions this summer because of schedule changes. The naturalist boards the train at 12:18pm at West Glacier for the eastbound trip, and then reboards the westbound train at 4:01pm for the return (Amtrak's release said 4:01am--a good candidate for our "Slip of the month club"). The naturalist circulates thru the domes and other cars, interpreting the geology and wildlife and distributing literature. Philip R. Iversen, superintendent of Glacier Park, said that the park, which he believes has the "most beautiful scenery in the nation", is the only one served by two rail stations--"very much in keeping with our nation's energy policies". Amtrak has tour packages to the park from Chicago or Twin Cities, starting at $134.35 for four days in the park. The NORTH COAST LIMITED serves Yellowstone National Park, to which Amtrak also offers tour packages.....

THE COMMENT HERE last issue that the Union Pacific may be the lobbyist behind the proposed Amtrak cutbacks has stimulated some comments: Says reader John Arbuckle, "I find it very difficult to believe these charges without more evidence. The PIONEER has about a 90% on-time record and I'll bet the SFZ's performance on UP is similar. UP makes handling a passenger train in a first class manner look so easy. They don't gripe, squawk or require costly environmental impact studies or court litigation to run a train; they just 'handle it'. It is certainly one of the most public-minded railroads and has very high employee morale." Suggests John Pawson: "Let UP grant D&RGW trackage rights for some Rio Grande freights over UP's more level and straight double track line between Denver and Salt Lake. Rio Grande could then agree to operate Amtrak's rerouted SFZ in place of its own

passenger train. Result: UP gets the train off its tracks, its double track main line is better utilized, Rio Grande improves its freight service, and its passenger losses become compensated, and the passengers get a more desirable routing"...

* * *

THE NATIONAL LIMITED will receive Amfleet equipment starting on Aug 13 westbound and Aug 15 eastbound. It will use 60-seat Amcoaches and electrified sleepers. At first, Amtrak said, sleeper service will be limited to New York-Indianapolis because of the shortage of rebuilt cars, but it will be extended to Kansas City in November. The Washington-Harrisburg section of the train will continue with conventional equipment until the Oct 29 schedule changeover, at which time the section will begin daily operation (it now runs tri-weekly) using Amfleet equipment. These will be thru cars which will connect with the main train at 30th St., Philadelphia. Amtrak said that altho the changed route of nos. 430 & 431 would mean a running time about 25mins longer, it would be "more reliable". The NATIONAL has run some of Amtrak's oldest equipment, and passenger complaints have been high. This led to the decision to Amfleet it. Coaches released from the train will be sent to Chicago for backup equipment for the LAKE SHORE, or to Beech Grove for eventual repair. By November Amtrak expects to have more sleeping cars electrified. In the meantime, it is believed that sleepers from the MONTREALER will be used, so that train and the NATIONAL will run just one sleeper per consist. The consist of the latter will be two F40PHR locomotives, a 1200-series baggage car, a 1400-series baggage dorm, a 2900-series 10/6 sleeper, an Amdinette and 3 or 4 Amcoaches..... * * *

AMTRAK SHAKEUP DAY coming. You can expect some important changes in personnel at Amtrak starting Aug 1, as President Alan Boyd starts his own reshaping of the rail corporation..... NORFOLK AND WESTERN strike has closed that railroad, and the HILLTOPPER has been running only Washington-Richmond since Jul 10.....

SOME JULY 30 schedule changes: the southbound MONTREALER will run 55 minutes faster between Montreal and St. Albans due to a new contract with Central Vermont Railway and speeded-up customs time. The COLONIAL is renamed the TIDEWATER on Sunday and holidays, and leaves Newport News northbound five hours later and runs only as far north as New York. Running time is 10-15 minutes faster due to completion of track work at Richmond. See also item on page 17.....

SOUTHERN RAILWAY OFFICIAL told an RTN reader that if Amtrak takes over the SOUTHERN CRESCENT, Amtrak would not be allowed to use the train name. Would it then become the SOUTHEASTERN LIMITED? Or would the SUNSET LIMITED become America's first transcontinental train?..... THE RUMOR MILL in Washington claims that in October Auto-Train will exit the passenger-carrying business and will replace it with a "we'll take your car, you take the plane (or Amtrak) to Florida." Passengers would drive their cars to a new station in Cranford NJ, just outside New York City, and the auto-rack cars would go via Conrail (Reading) to Philadelphia, B&O to Washington, RF&P to Richmond, and SCL to Florida. Passengers would be bused to JFK airport and flown to Orlando. Their cars would arrive the next afternoon at the Auto-Train station at Sanford FL. Auto-Train president Eugene Garfield has confirmed these arrangements--the rumor is that the present passenger service would be dropped. Garfield said that the new service will not affect its passenger operation. Auto-Train is awaiting ICC approval to start the new operation. The Wall Street Journal reported Jul 6 that Auto-Train had hired a New York investment banking concern to help it restructure its debt.....

AMTRAK HAS GEARED nine GG-1 locomotives for 100mph service to haul Amfleet cars on Metroliner schedules. The locos are 901, 902, 906, 908, 912, 915, 916, 926 and 4935..... EASTBOUND NATIONAL LIMITED at Kansas City on Jul 6 was sideswiped by a Frisco freight that reportedly ran a signal as train 30 was leaving the east end of the station near the Grand Avenue Bridge. The second engine was

struck, knocking out several side panels, and scraping, gashing and derailing 3 baggage cars: 1209 (deadhead), 1098 (Dallas-NY), and 1088 (L.A.-NY). No injuries were reported, and the train continued with the remainder of its consist.....

THE SOUTHBOUND MONTREALER was delayed the night of Jul 10 by a fire on a wooden trestle across Missisquoi Bay, an arm of Lake Champlain. The train was almost 3 hours late when seen at Springfield. After that date the trains were terminated at St. Albans and passengers bused to and from Montreal. First reports estimated the bridge would be out of service until Jul 26..... ERNEST M. FRIMBO has another train article in the New Yorker (Jul 3), a fairly lengthy one on riding an open-platform car from Newark to Phillipsburg..... CHICAGO TO MILWAUKEE Amtrak route shift from Milwaukee Road to C&NW tracks is being opposed by the latter railroad...

* * *

A DETOUR ON the Empire Service line was in effect about the last 10 days of June. The LAKE SHORE, NIAGARA RAINBOW, EMPIRE STATE EXPRESS, and SALT CITY EXPRESS all detoured via the Hudson River Connecting Railroad including A. H. Smith Bridge to and from Selkirk Yard because of track work between Colonie and CP 8. Bus connections were provided for Colonie and Albany NY..... THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE'S transportation editor David Young named Santa Fe, Rock Island and Amtrak as the three railroads with the most effective public relations programs.....

A MOTHER AND 6-year old daughter escaped from their car stalled on tracks just seconds before the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR struck it and knocked it into a ravine in West Sacramento CA on May 31. Direction of travel of the train was not known. The driver had attempted to go around closed crossing gates.....

STEAMTOWN U.S.A. OFFICIALS say they probably will move from Vermont to Orlando FL or Kingston NY this fall due to poor tourist promotion by the state.....

FIRST REBUILT FL9 engine from M-K was delivered to Amtrak on Jul 9 at Harmon Shops. It was formerly engine #239 (PC 5016), and will be used for hauling Amfleet cars out of Grand Central Terminal. Seven more such engines are to come.....

WALT DISNEY CORPORATION has reportedly expressed interest in reviving a Merced to Yosemite railroad, at an estimated cost of $100 million. A public hearing on Jun 27 with Amtrak, the National Park Service, Caltrans and others represented found many supporting a possible feasibility study. Later reports indicate that opposition is growing to the idea, however..... AMTRAK RIDERSHIP FIGURES for May, received just before going to press, show a 1.1% drop in ridership overall compared to May 1977. Short distance dropped 2.4% and long distance 1.9%. A total of 1,664,729 passengers were carried..... AN AMTRAK TRAIN, either the LONE STAR or INTER-AMERICAN, was in a train-auto collission in Temple TX on Jun 30. Two of the 8 auto occupants were killed..... ABNORMAL HEAT WAVE in Texas in late June and much of July resulted in a number of deaths. We are told that Amfleet air conditioning units there have been failing daily on the INTER-AMERICAN, the air-cooled condensers cutting out because they can't dissipate the heat generated fast enough. The electrified sleepers are functioning well, however. The Amdinette car on the I-A runs out of food "consistently". Recently #22 left Ft. Worth virtually without food, and the Dallas chief ticket agent and his wife hurriedly made sandwiches to supply the train by the time it reached their city.....

NORTH COAST HIAWATHA due in Missoula MT at 7:20pm Jul 16 arrived at 1:15pm the next day, 17hrs 55mins late. A freight derailment near Manden ND delayed it, and #17 detoured up to the Hi-Line thru Minot and Williston and came down to Glendive via Snowden and Sidney MT. The lead engine was BN freight unit 5749, as one of two F40PHR units had been bad-ordered. The train is said to be carrying large crowds this summer..... TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY ADAMS has denied the truth of a NY Times article of mid-July that said he would resign before year-end because of problems and frustrations with the White House, Congress and his staff. Other newspaper reports talk of increasing dissension and friction in the DOT that could damage his political image as an able administrator.....

BROKEN POWER CABLE fell on an ICG low-level commuter train in Chicago Jul 10 and started a fire that delayed 20,000 commuters. Some passengers were injured jumping from the train..... SEABOARD COAST LINE Industries elected A. Paul Funkhouser president Jul 20, to succeed Prime F. Osborn..... THE DOT'S HEARING in Washington on Jul 26 concerning rules for the handicapped in transportation was cancelled, and hearings, details to be announced, will be held instead in 5 separate cities..... NATIONWIDE RAILROAD STRIKE was evidently averted in July by wage agreements made with several unions..... FLASH FLOODS IN Milwaukee area in early July forced Amtrak trains to use the C&NW line for its Milwaukee runs...

LOS ANGELES COUNTY will stop subsidizing the EL CAMINO train to San Diego because of the Proposition 13 funding crush, but Caltrans and Amtrak will continue to support it at least until fall. The conventional consist has been withdrawn in favor of Amfleet cars because of equipment problems..... THE CALTRANS BUDGET for 1978-79 ended up larger than the agency requested--$1.24 billion, an increase of $11.9 million--in spite of Proposition 13 woes in the state..... THE COAST STARLIGHT and an auto collided as the northbound train left the Albany OR station on Jul 5 and the car driver was killed..... AUTOMATIC TRACK-LAYING system was demonstrated on the NE Corridor Improvement Project Jul 24 near Kingston RI.....

A FEDERAL BILL that would give airlines $2.3 billion to quiet airplanes is being called a direct subsidy for the profitable companies to buy new equipment and is reportedly in trouble in the House..... CHICAGO, NORTH SHORE and Milwaukee RR former employees annual picnic will be held Aug 20 in Waukegan IL. Phone (312) 746-2296 for info..... Mailing date this issue: July 27, 1978.

THE ICC AMTRAK CUTBACK HEARINGS

(continued from page 9)

SACRAMENTO: Caltrans director Adriana Gianturco spoke in favor of expanded service and more funding. Greyhound and Trailways representatives said Amtrak is a waste of money. Gianturco said elimination of the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR is "incomprehensible." The SFZ was the focus of much of the testimony. Citizens for Rail California VP Roger Hooson said: "Legislators, in the wake of Proposition 13, would do well to bear this in mind: the mandate to cut unnecessary services is clear; just as clear is the mandate to expand rail passenger service. The DOT report ignores the will of the people and the nation's energy needs, and instead focuses upon rail contraction. Its recommendations will not significantly reduce the Amtrak deficit." Hooson said that without cutting a single route other methods could reduce the Amtrak deficit:

*Carrying more mail on trains.
*Reforming archaic union work rules.
*Increasing the capital budget to decrease operating subsidies.

CRC gave six reasons why the SFZ should not be discontinued.

The Northern California RR Club is sponsoring a Demand Adequate Railroad Travel (DART) Coalition, and prepared testimony also for this meeting.

RENO: Both Nevada Senators testified in favor of SFZ retention. Sen. Cannon said 8 states would lose service if the SFZ went. As possible alternatives he suggested a limited or seasonal SFZ schedule or a Reno-Oakland run.

DENVER: Colorado Governor Dick Lamm supported the SFZ, calling the proposed cutback "illogical." About 25 testified, including RTN reader and Sierra Club member Carl Fowler. Fowler said the SFZ is underpromoted, its fares excessive, and its schedule uncoordinated with connecting services. Others testifying in favor of rail service were the National Conference of State Railway Officials, the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club, the Colorado ARP, the Colorado AFL-CIO, and the UTU. A Trailways bus representative hit at "massive" Amtrak subsidies. A former owner of the Boulder bus system called Amtrak a "disaster."

DALLAS: Most witnesses favored rail travel. Many complaints were voiced about the handling of the INTER-AMERICAN. NARP people including director Dan Monaghan testified, as well as city and county officials. There were 54 people speaking in favor of rail travel, and 5 against. Three of the 5 opposed were bus representatives (from Greyhound, Trailways and Central Texas), one was an aide of Congressman Jim Collins, and one a "taxpayer". Rail supporter John Landrum compared the DOT's techniques toward Amtrak with the "Big Lie" technique used in Nazi Germany--tell the people something often enough and loud enough and they will believe it.

MIAMI, JACKSONVILLE, TAMPA: A number of pro-bus witnesses appeared. It was learned that Greyhound had paid they way of one or more of them to appear. In Tampa 20 or 25 people testified in a pro-bus manner. It was found later that a Greyhound driver paid their meal expenses as a group. NARP director Charles Dunn testified at Miami in favor of rail service.

PITTSBURGH: Managers, drivers and other employees of Greyhound and Trailways were in attendance. Among others, reader William Benswanger testified as an individual; he called for a constructive approach--addition of routes to fill system gaps; increased train frequencies on many routes; more mail carrying; establishment and maintenance of scheduling and connections to create a marketable service. (The Pittsburgh hearing was on Jul 17.)

LITTLE ROCK: Twenty of 24 persons supported the INTER-AMERICAN. The only opponents of Amtrak were bus and NTU representatives. Trailways had prepared "fill-in-the-blank" canned copy for testimony. The ICC office got notice of the hearing here only 4 days before the Jul 6 hearing date. But an ICC official called it the biggest Arkansas turnout in 12 years for an ICC hearing.

TWIN CITIES, FARGO: Minnesota ARP urged members to air their views at these hearings, in the first issues of "Minnesota Rail Passenger News" (June).

NEW YORK CITY: NARP member William R. Wright was among supporters of train service who testified. He suggested improvements in Amtrak operations and management, including addition of Washington/Pittsburgh/Cleveland routes, Detroit/Cincinnati/Louisville, and extensions such as Boston-Bangor and Twin Cities-Winnipeg.

ST. LOUIS: Reader David Riddle commented on "outdated, inaccurate and sloppy information and figures given in testimony here." Sen. Danforth supported the proposed cuts.

MILWAUKEE, RACINE: Hearings well-attended, with most people favoring expanded Amtrak service.

CHICAGO: Again, Greyhound, Trailways and local bus interests testified. NARP director Ronald Boardman Jr. spoke out for rail travel. The Illinois DOT made a pitch for the Chicago-Peoria line. Illinois ARP was represented.

SAN ANTONIO: Speakers generally wanted rail service, and noted the deficiencies of the INTER-AMERICAN in the past.

THE BIG, BAD FINALE

At the last hearing, in Washington, Anti-Amtrak forces brought out their big guns, and according to a first-hand report the anti-rail testimony dominated the daytime session. Leading off was Paul Gann, co-author of Proposition 13. Trailways president Murphy spoke, criticizing the Amtrak Kellogg's promotion and calling the NE Corridor a "$100 million loser". Greyhound president H. J. Lesko tried to disprove Amtrak's fuel efficiency figures and called for a stop to the NE Corridor Improvement Project. Among Amtrak supporters were NARP's Capon and Zucker, Al Runte from California, Caltrans's Sandra Spence, Sen. Strom Thurmond, and three men from the National Conference of State Railway Officials. Tony Roisman of the Natural Resources Defense Council petitioned that the DOTstudy be halted until DOT files an environmental impact statement relative to the proposed cuts. 37 spoke.

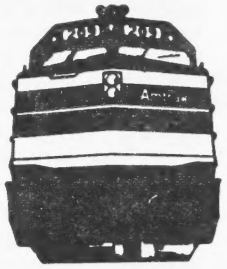
LATE NEWS FLASH: At Amtrak's Jul 26 Board meeting, the consultant's report on the DOT plan was accepted, but no position on it was taken yet.

A CALTRANS RAIL SERVICE PROGRAM

The California Department of Transportation in July began distributing draft copies of its Program of Intercity Rail Service, described as a "guide to the development of a system of passenger trains linking California cities."

Caltrans Director Adriana Gianturco points out in the introduction that "Passenger trains have a bright future in California." She indicates that California has "one of the largest untapped rail markets in the country". The present effort is only a "modest start", she notes, at "creating a full network of train service".

The plan examines existing service (intercity, not commuter trains) and makes evaluations of a number of suggested corridors and routes. Comparisons of these routes show feasibility factors ranging from high (e.g., San Diego-Sacramento) to relatively low (Monterey-San Francisco; Eureka-San Rafael). Factors on which the routes are compared include: a market of over 5 million people within 10 miles; a market on the low half of the route greater than 10,000 people per mile; good access to population centers; major tourist market; highway congestion present; existence of overlapping rail corridors; daily frequency more than one each way; efficient use of crews; over 400 daily miles per trainset; no major new facilities required; no track improvements required; and finally percentage of direct costs and total costs covered by revenues (estimated).



For existing rail service, the COAST STARLIGHT covers 107% of its direct costs, the report finds. The SUNSET LIMITED covers 106%, the SOUTHWEST LIMITED 70%, the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR 73%. By comparison, a San Diego-Sacramento train would cover 90% of its direct costs, a Tijuana-Los Angeles or Tijuana-San Fernando Valley train 110%. A Monterey-San Francisco train would cover only 15% (compared with the SAN JOAQUIN's 10%) and a Eureka-San Rafael run would cover 18%.

Following these evaluations, Caltrans recommends four service improvements as a first round of improvements. These are: initiation of a Sacramento-San Diego train; extension of the SAN JOAQUIN to San Diego; extension of a SAN DIEGAN to Santa Barbara; and addition of a 7th SAN DIEGAN. These projects would require only minimal capital investment--mostly for the Sacramento-San Diego run.

In the second round, these projects would appear, requiring higher capital costs than the above: extension of 2 SAN DIEGANS to Chatsworth in San Fernando Valley; extension of 3 SAN DIEGANS to Tijuana, Mexico; San Jose-North Sacramento service, followed by a second such train.

The above plan is seen as a two-year program, and Caltrans is not suggesting a fixed plan of development beyond that time because of changing market conditions.

Copies of the report are available from: Caltrans, Division of Mass Transportation, Box 1499, Sacramento CA 95814.

THE SOUTHERN CRESCENT HEARINGS

June hearings on the proposed discontinuance by Southern Railway of the SOUTHERN CRESCENT produced a variety of witnesses, including industrialists--customers of SR--who supported the railway's petition, to railfans, environmentalists, and commuters. Said one supporter, "I have never found any pleasure being strapped in a plane." He said he found the train's service "splendid, the meals delicious and the libations full-bodied." Bob Clark, chairman of the Crescent Route Transcontinental Rail Services Research Committee of NARP's Houston chapter, questioned the railway's alleged $6 million yearly losses. The ICC has until Aug 6 to decide.

NEW NATIONWIDE TIMETABLE ISSUED

Amtrak issued a national timetable dated Jul 30 in an edition of 400,000 copies. The new schedule, printed in brown and blue, is the first to bear president Alan Boyd's signature. There are some Northeast Corridor changes, and the EMPIRE BUILDER shows shorter running times with its change back to its Stampede Pass route. It now leaves Seattle at 8:15pm and arrives there at 9:05am. Long distance trains now have complimentary coffee or tea on request in the mornings, the timetable notes.

CARS & CONSISTS

*SOUTHWEST LIMITED, train 3, Kansas City Jul 3: engines ATSF 5030 (SD40), 515, 523 (failed); cars 1111, 9994, 9904, 9944, 9925, 9953, 9972, 9981, 9913, 2214 "Indian Lake", 2616 "Pacific Home", dome slpr 9214, 2233 "Sebring", 1109 on at KC. Train 4, Jul 11, K.C.: engines 513 (SDP), 718 (P30), 528 (SDP); cars 1184, 1094, 2401 "Bad Axe River", 9904, 9954, 9972, 9981, 9929, 2214 "Indian Lake", 2616 "Pacific Home", 2707 "Bradenton", 2367 "Regal River", (deadhead bi-levels:) 34006, 34002, 34005, 34007, (deadhead hi-level:) 9940, ATSF business car 54 on at KC. Train 3, Jul 12, K.C.: engines ATSF 8707 (U36C, on at KC), 514, 515 (failed); cars 1195, 9995, 9926, 9963, 9952, 9974, 9984, 9911, 2220 "Indian Squaw", 2762 "Palm View", dome slpr 9214, 2233 "Sebring", 1035 on at KC.

*LONE STAR, train 16, Emporia 1:49am Jul 14 (2hr14min late): engines 526, 528; cars 1108, 2724 "Pine Leaf", 8042, 9902, 9925, 9920, 3390, 8043, 2262 "Placid Haven", 2652 "Silver Butte", 2755 "Palm Lore", 1207 (to KC), 9903 deadhead Topeka. (Train 7 held 1hr17min in Chicago for connection for tour group from no. 16.)

*SUPER CONTINENTAL, VIA train 4, Vancouver Jul 1: engines 6507, 6613, 6607; cars 9672, 5585, 5621, 5649, 764, 5732, 5707, "Elmsdale", "Eastport", "Greenvale", "Athabasca", 1362, "Emerald", "Ennishore", "Evanston", "Iriguois". First train in all-VIA colors at Vancouver (same in as #3 same date).

*MONTREALER, train 61, White River Jct, Jul 14: engine 213 (F40); cars 1454, 2989 "Pine Fern", 2983 "Pine Arroyo", 20210 Amdinette, 20110 Food Service Car, coaches 21509, 21826, 21814, 21844.

*BROADWAY LIMITED, train 41, Harrisburg Jul 8: engines 258 (F40PHR), 430, 417, 440 (E's); cars 1106, 1216, 1214, 4828, 5425, 5400, 5257, 5402, 5407, 5646, 3404, 8804-8805, 3209, 2556 "The Potomac", 2025 "Loch Leven", 2004, 2834 "Navajo Valley", Amtrak business car 10,000.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"I have always believed that the kind of people who like railroad trains are the same kind of people who drink a glass of warm milk before going to bed.

I have been forced throughout the years to read endless stories about how wonderful and nostalgic and just gosh darn fun it is to ride on choochoo trains.

This has led to many arguments. I do not like trains. I think they, like Conestoga wagons, have a certain historical interest. But all things considered, I'd rather take poison than a train."

--Roger Simon in Chicago Sun-Times, Jul 9.

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"...BART will never run trains at 90-second intervals, as contemplated at the start, nor guarantee every patron a seat on every trip. Actually, present riders will gladly settle for trips completed without being ejected from crippled trains. The prospects for that are brighter, Saturday service is now a fact and Sunday service is just around the corner."

--San Francisco Examiner editorial, Jul 3.

(In fact, it began yesterday.)

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RAIL FANTRIPS

Aug 5: Trolley tour San Francisco Muni Rwy, 1912 car #1; lv Geneva carhouse 9am. $11. SSAE to Elect. Rwy Hist. Ass'n of So. Calif., c/o J C Stewart, 2439 Fourth St, #4, Santa Monica, CA 90405.

Oct 14: Foliage trip Boston MA-Chatham NY RT, via CR's former B&A line; Westfield River Gorge, Berkshires; runbys, etc. $29.95 before Sep 18, $34.95 after. Mass. Bay RR Enthusiasts Inc, Box 1361, Ward Hill, MA 01830.

Aug 19-Sep 4: Hudson Bay Holiday from L.A. or S.F.; "Queen of Prince Rupert", Rupert Rocket, CANADIAN, etc., RT to Churchill. From $1100. Great Western Tours, Sheraton Palace Hotel, 9th Floor, San Francisco CA 94105. 398-2994.

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STREET-CAR NOSTALGIA: "Trolley Trails Through the West": Vol. 1 - Yakima; Vol. 2 - Seattle; Vol. 3 - Portland, $3.00 each, postpaid, moneyback guarantee. Wilson Bros. Publications, Dept. RTN, Box 712, Yakima WA 98907.

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HELP SAVE CANADA'S PASSENGER TRAINS. Join TRANSPORT 2000 Canada: - for regional associations, quarterly bulletins, briefs, all for $5 annually. Send your fee to Membership Services, Transport 2000, Box/C.P. 300, Term. A, Ottawa, K1N8V3, Ont.

NORTHWEST PASSAGE, Aug 26-Sep 10 Private car trip from Syracuse and Buffalo west to Portland, Seattle, Vancouver and NRHS Convention via Lakeshore Limited, North Coast Hiawatha; return thru Canada via CN, using open-platform office car LV 353 and sleeper Pend Oreille River. Rates from $895 include lite breakfast daily and eight luncheons or dinners in 353 while running, plus use of sleeper as hotel at convention. Lehigh Black Diamond Limited, P.O. Box 353, Syracuse, N.Y. 13201.

Color posters of four Boston and Maine RR GP40's crossing Hudson River Bridge. 9½x11½. Send $1.50 to PR Dept, B&M RR, Iron Horse Park, N. Billerica MA 01862.

ROCK ISLAND TABLECLOTH BARGAIN. 32x52 tablecloth (woven crest and date) plus two large napkins (crest and date): very good $10; good $8.50, and fair $6.25--shipping paid. B. Fahrenwald, 3643 N. Greenview, Chicago IL 60613. Three weeks' delivery--items may require pressing.

PASSENGER TRAIN SONGS: LP top quality train collector's stereo album--"People, Trains and Things." Authentic archives recording of songs such as: Amtrak, The Southern Crescent, Auto-Train, TurboTrain, Asheville Special plus 7 others. Full color cover of famous TurboTrain No. 50. Album $5.35 pp, 8-track tape $6.35 pp. Passenger Train Music Publishers, 3025 Blalock Dr, West Columbia SC 29169. Want distributors.

Sept 16-17 Bakersfield by Special train from Los Angeles. Santa Fe route via Santa Ana Canyon, Cajon Pass, Barstow, Tehachapi Loop over some freight-only trackage. Hi-level chair cars, 2 club cars. $95 in chair car includes overnight lodging in Bakersfield & two lunches. Special low fares for connections from San Diego County points. Parlor car and one-way fares also available. Brochure from Let's Travel, P O Box 2768, Riverside CA 92516. Phone (714) 787-8350.

Atlantic Coast Line, Florida East Coast, Seaboard, Southern; Missouri, Northern, Southern, Union and Western Pacific uniform buttons. Blazer set two large and four small $2.95 postpd. Joseph Lajoie, 22 Stevens, Methuen, Mass. 01844.

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

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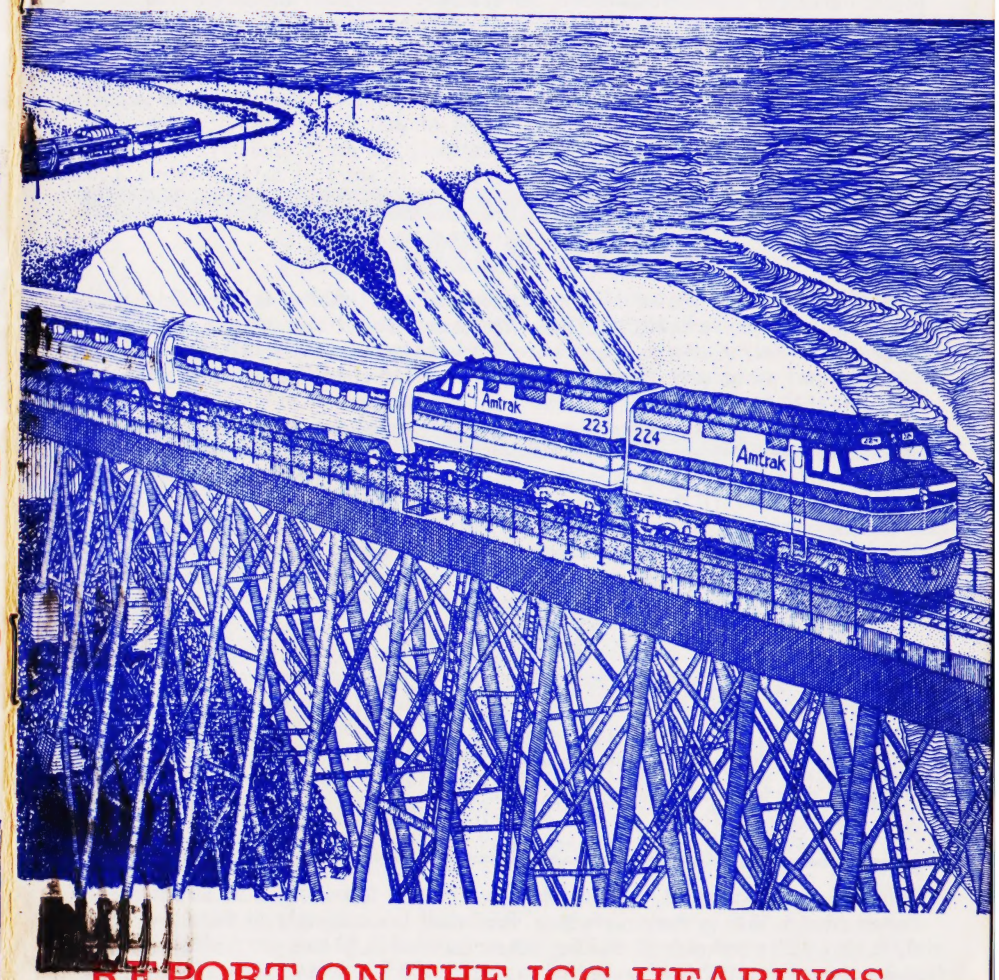

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